

CHAPTER 4: INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON LOAD LINES, 66/88

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses issues relative to load lines and the conditions of their issuance. The contents are enhancements to the ICLL 66/88 and 46 CFR Subchapter E. These sources are the primary references for load line actions.

SECTION E: INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS, TREATIES, STANDARDS, AND REGULATIONS

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B. LOADLINE REQUIREMENTS FOR VESSELS TRANSITING BEYOND THE BOUNDARY LINE

Recent revisions to the statutory language governing loadline requirements in 46 USC §5102 have eliminated the exemption opportunity vessels previously enjoyed from the wording in 46 CFR §42.03-5(b)(v). This revision applies to all vessels which transit beyond the boundary line, including vessels conducting round-trip domestic “coastwise” voyages without visiting another U.S. port—so called “voyages to nowhere.”

Until the regulations in Title 46 CFR are revised, this guidance shall hold as the Coast Guard enforcement policy on loadline requirements for vessels transiting beyond the boundary line, regardless of whether or not another port is visited during that voyage.

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C. LOAD LINE CERTIFICATE EXTENSION AUTHORITY

NOTE: This action modifies policy previously set forth in the MSM IV, Ch. 6.F.4.b., and is issued in advance of its revision.

46 CFR §42.07-45 allows Commandant to grant loadline extensions up to the 150 days past the certificate's anniversary date, as provided for in the International Convention on Load Lines. Reference 46 CFR §42.07-45 also allows extensions of up to 365 days on Great Lakes' Load Line Certificates to be granted by Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District (m) (D9). Reference MSM IV, Ch. 6.F.4.b. allows approved assignment authorities to issue extensions up to 150 days based on a satisfactory "complete periodical survey required for the issuance of a new certificate" and approval by Commandant.

In the spirit of harmonization and efficiency, approved assignment authorities may grant extensions of up to, but not exceeding, 150 days for both international and Great Lakes Load Line Certificates. The extensions may be granted by the approved assignment authority without receiving prior written approval from either Commandant or D9, upon the satisfactory completion of:

- a. A condition survey afloat, including gaugings and internal examination as necessary to determine whether the vessel is fit to continue in operation during the period of the certificate extension. This survey must confirm that there have been no alterations to the structure, equipment, arrangement, or scantlings, which would affect the vessel in any way relative to the condition of the Certificate's issuance.
- b. Correction of any unsatisfactory items found during the afloat survey. These items shall be corrected in accordance with Title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 42.09-45 before the Provisional Load Line Certificate may be issued.

The cognizant USCG OCMI for the examination port is to be notified prior to initiating the extension surveys. He/She may chose to assign a USCG marine inspector to attend during the examination.

Extensions of Load Line Certificates *may not* be granted *after* the Certificate's expiration date. Vessels whose Load Line Certificate expires will be required to have an "initial load line survey" conducted for issuance of a new Certificate. Commandant (G-MOC-2) is to be notified by the approved assigning authority of any vessel that requests extensions after their certificate has expired.

CHAPTER 4: INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON LOAD LINES, 66/88**D. USE OF NON-EXCLUSIVE SURVEYORS TO ISSUE LOAD LINE CERTIFICATES**

There has been increasing concern about both the diminished availability of local ABS surveyors for issuing load lines, and the additional costs associated with bringing in surveyors from distant locations in order to conduct the required load line examinations. To help alleviate this burden on the vessel owner, ABS may utilize certain non-exclusive surveyors to conduct load line surveys on behalf of the United States Coast Guard. This is an issue that has been addressed in a few different ways officially over the years. This formalizes the Coast Guard policy pertaining to the employment of non-exclusive surveyors for the purpose of issuing, re-issuing and renewing Load Line Certificates.

In the past we have maintained that only the following two groups could perform this function: retired/former ABS Exclusive Surveyors or retired/former USCG Marine Inspectors—qualified to conduct Load Line Surveys. However, this was before ABS instituted its Quality Management System (QMS). With its QMS in place ensuring the qualifications and training of all personnel performing activities on behalf of ABS, we no longer see the need to continue our previous restrictions. ABS' QMS now serves this purpose. ABS may, for the purpose of conducting the requisite load line surveys *only*, utilize those non-exclusive surveyors that meet the following criteria:

- The Non-Exclusive Surveyor's competencies are in full compliance with ABS Quality System Survey Procedure SWZ-002-99-P04.
- For the purpose of issuing Load Line Certificates on behalf of the United States Coast Guard to U.S.-flagged vessels, the Non-Exclusive Surveyor's competencies must be in full compliance with ABS Quality System Survey Procedure SWZ-002-05-P04, and recorded in the Training Certification Record.
- The actual Load Line Certificate is to be issued by the ABS Principal Surveyor. The Non-Exclusive Surveyor may sign for the annual endorsement or provide a Provisional or Short-Term Conditional Load Line Certificate.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of ABS to establish and validate a potential Non-Exclusive Surveyor's compliance under this policy initiative.